

Comox Valley Economic Development and Tourism (CVEDS) Q3 2019 – Strategic Priorities Report Summary Highlights

Comox Valley & Northern Vancouver Island Food Innovation and Processing Hub

The Comox Valley Economic Development Society's (CVEDS) approved 2019 Strategic Priorities Work Plan included supporting and facilitating an Innovation Centre for Food / Seafood Processing project. Further, as part of the Innovate 2030 Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan process, an online Business Survey was undertaken where agrifood processing facilities was identified as the top major infrastructure project that would have the most positive impact on the Comox Valley's economy. In June 2019, the Ministry of Agriculture released a Request for Qualifications (No. 10554) for a Food Hub Network project. With the direction of the Work Plan, and the support of 20+ partner groups, CVEDS prepared and submitted to the RFQ Small Scale Food Processing and Innovation Centre project category in early July. CVEDS RFQ qualified successfully to participate in the development of the Request for Proposal (RFP) process, which was submitted Sept. 3.

Vancouver Island Visitor Centre – Summer at a Glance

The Centre is the busiest centre on Vancouver Island, behind only the downtown Victoria centre and the Tofino centre. It welcomed and served over 8k true visitors this summer from British Columbia, Europe and beyond, brining the total visitors served since opening to 240k+. Expanding its bricks and mortar services, the Centre activated its Mobile Visitor Centre unit this summer to attend nine festivals and events in the Comox Valley, engaging 2k+ visitors. CVEDS and their Visitor Centre team became a Google Trusted Verifier DMO Partner, to help support regional businesses to be digital ready and visible across key online search engines like Google and TripAdvisor. This free Google My Business Verification Program supports businesses to help verify/optimize their Google My Business listing, which includes a site visit to the business to take 360 degree photos and upload them to the businesses Google My Business Listing.

Business Counts Fall Workshop Series Development

October is Small Business Month and CVEDS developed its annual fall Business Counts Lunch & Learn Sessions, Professional Development Workshops, and a Tourism Industry Mini-Conference for local business owners, managers, and staff to access professional skills and business development, and networking opportunities. Many of the sessions are free and include: Lunch & Learn Workshop Series sponsored by the Business Development Bank of Canada, with topics including starting a new business, alternative sources of capital, business transition, food safety innovations, to expanding markets. Additional professional development workshops have been scheduled to focus on the tourism and hospitality sector including: 'Superhost Destination Ambassador Comox Valley', a Food & Beverage Industry Workshop 'Make Social Media Work for You', and the 'Grow with Google' session. These culminate with the largest tourism industry event, Tourism Industry Mini-Conference, October 24, Vancouver Island Visitor Centre, with mini-sessions, tradeshow, 2020 marketing and event registrations, input on 2020 tourism plans, and networking dinner.

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